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Executive Board of the
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Programme and of the
United Nations Population Fund

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UNDP: Financial, budgetary and administrative matters information on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditure, 1999

Report of the Administrator

I. Purpose

1. To facilitate the work of the Executive Board and in response to Governing Council decision 81/34 of 27 June 1981, the present report contains a summary of the technical cooperation expenditure of the United Nations system. Technical cooperation expenditure, for the purposes of this report, is taken as the summation of programme expenditure, net of support and administrative costs, provided by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the executing and specialized agencies, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The World Bank/IDA is excluded from this traditional view of technical cooperation, defined as free-standing, grant-free assistance aimed at expanding the "software" aspects of development. The World Bank/IDA does, however, offer a similar category of assistance specifically geared to backstop its large-scale programmes and projects.

2. It is also necessary to observe that the present report deals only with technical cooperation expenditure, not total expenditure, by the United Nations system. A complete account of expenditure on development activities undertaken by the entire United Nations system can be found in the annual report of the Secretary-General on development activities. The rest of the discussion in this document is based on the table at the end of the report and on document DP/2000/39/Add.1.

II. Highlights

3. The provision of technical cooperation, geared to enhance the capacity of developing countries to generate and manage their own development, is a prime goal

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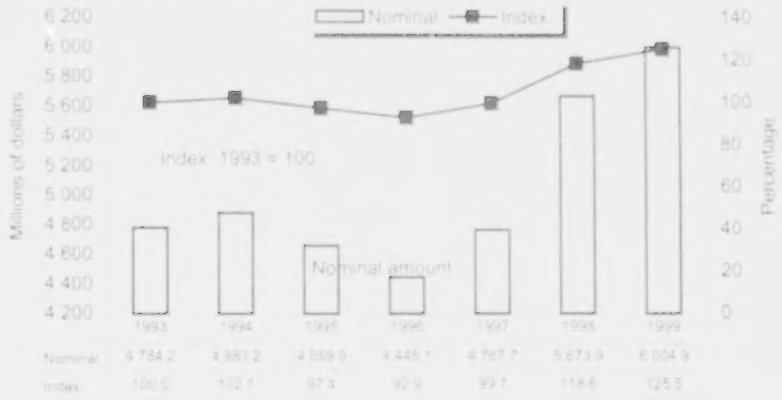
of the United Nations system. Aside from the requisite legislative mandates, two empirical indicators adequately reflect this responsibility. These are (a) the volume of technical cooperation expenditure, which averaged $3.4 billion per year during the two decades between 1980-1999, and (b) the rate of expansion of technical cooperation expenditure — about 6.4 per cent annually during the last 20 years, although the actual yearly rate fluctuated considerably. The volume of assistance continues to grow, despite a decline in its rate of growth in 1995 and 1996 which had not been seen since 1983. Growth resumed in 1997 and has continued since then at, more or less, its trend rate. This seems to suggest that technical cooperation expenditure has not followed *pari passu* the downward trend that has characterized total Official Development Assistance (ODA) (or even its multilateral component) for sometime now. For example, total ODA (bilateral plus multilateral), after peaking at $60.8 billion in 1992, contracted to $56.0 billion by 1999 while technical cooperation expenditure has stagnated at about $4.2 billion since 1993 (see table 24 of document DP/2000/39/Add.1 for more detailed information).

4. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), technical cooperation expenditure from the United Nations system averaged about 25 per cent of multilateral ODA during 1987-1998. This indicates that it was higher during 1987-1991 than during 1992-1999: 25.9 per cent compared to 24.6 per cent. However, the first period was associated with a greater degree of fluctuation: a standard deviation of 2 compared to 1.6. In other words, United Nations share of multilateral ODA was not only lower during 1992-1998 it was also more stable, suggesting the existence of a lower, but apparently more stable, plateau of technical cooperation expenditure. The UNDP share (regular expenditure only) of multilateral ODA did not enjoy as good a performance: it declined steadily from 7.2 per cent in 1987 to 4.3 per cent in 1998.

5. Buoyed by the up-phase of the empirical expenditure cycle, which is defined only by its pattern, technical cooperation expenditure delivered by the United Nations system rose from $5.67 billion in 1998 to $6 billion in 1999, representing an increase of 5.8 per cent, which is in excess of the world inflation rate of 3.3 per cent (see "World Economic Outlook, May 2000", International Monetary Fund). The stimulus imparted to the performance of overall expenditure was due principally to the robust rates of growth posted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Bank Group.

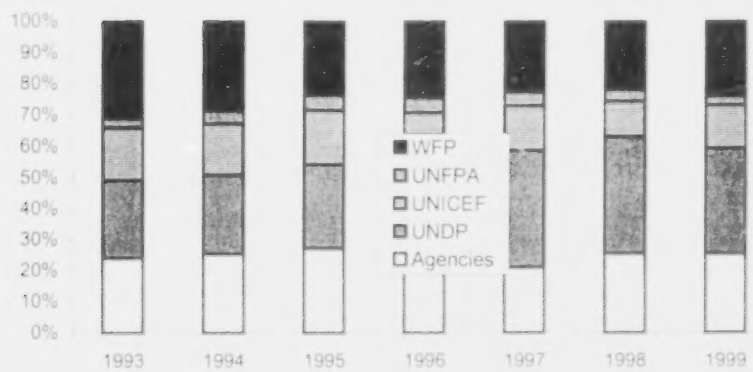
6. If the data for the United Nations system is viewed over a longer period, it will be noticed that the dollar value of assistance increased from $4.8 billion to $6.0 billion between 1993 and 1999. This computes to an increase of 25.5 per cent in seven years. The path to this higher level of assistance traced out a U-curve (the empirical expenditure cycle referred to above), which is indicative of the cyclical nature of the dollar value of the developmental effort supplied by the United Nations system. (If the data from 1980 is graphed, it will be seen that the up-phase of the last cycle ended in 1994. The current cycle, shown in chart 1, began in 1995.) Once a trough was established in 1996, when technical cooperation expenditure amounted to $4.4 billion, a recovery ensued — at the up-phase of the cycle and with technical cooperation expenditure 25 per cent higher than 1995.

Chart 1
United Nations system: technical cooperation expenditure, 1993-1999



7. While all five entities of the United Nations system involved in technical cooperation are much valued for the services they provide, their share in the annual flow of this assistance varies. Close to one third (31.7 per cent) of the total stock of technical cooperation expenditure supplied during the seven-year period was provided by UNDP; a quarter (25.1 per cent) by WFP; 24 per cent by the agencies; 15 per cent by UNICEF; and the rest, 4.0 per cent, by UNFPA (chart 2). In general, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the agencies (taken as a whole) have experienced some diminution of their relative importance during the seven-year period. On the other hand, UNDP has witnessed a growing presence in technical cooperation, especially since 1995. The large presence of UNDP is readily seen from chart 2: it is the single most important source of such expenditure in the United Nations system. Its share of this expenditure stood at 37.6 per cent in 1998, having moved from 25 per cent in 1993. The data for 1999 indicate that the UNDP presence was compressed slightly (34 per cent).

Chart 2
United Nations system: technical cooperation expenditure by source, 1993-1999 (percentage)



8. Total expenditure of UNDP (comprising regular resources, its associated cost-sharing and funds and trust funds) deployed in the pursuit of sustainable human development reached $2,044.1 million in 1999. Even at this high level, expenditure was 4.1 per cent smaller than in 1998, when $2,130.8 million was disbursed. Of significance, this was the first contraction of overall expenditure from UNDP since 1993.

9. The two components contributed in different ways to the overall growth of UNDP technical cooperation expenditure. The largest is, of course, the component of regular resources and its associated cost-sharing, which was fully deployed in pursuit of the organization's mission. This mission-oriented component accounted for 80 per cent of total UNDP expenditure in 1999, but it is also marked by a persistent tendency to decline over time — from 86 per cent of total UNDP programme expenditure to 80 per cent between 1993 and 1999. In other words, the mission-oriented core of overall UNDP activities shows a tendency to narrow over time (as activities supported by funds and trust funds expand). Expenditure incurred by the mission-oriented component of the Programme amounted to $1,631.8 million in 1999, which is 7.5 per cent less than in 1998 ($1,763 million). Of this amount, $515.7 million (including $3.3 million government cash counterpart contribution (GCCC)) was regular expenditure and $1,116.1 million cost-sharing expenditure. Evidently, the bulk of mission-oriented expenditure was cost-sharing expenditure, which could be more clearly seen from the fact that the share of the latter rose from 33.1 per cent in 1993 to 68.4 in 1999. The overwhelming portion of cost-sharing resources has always been provided by the Latin America and Caribbean region — 80.6 per cent in 1999 as against 85.7 in the previous year.

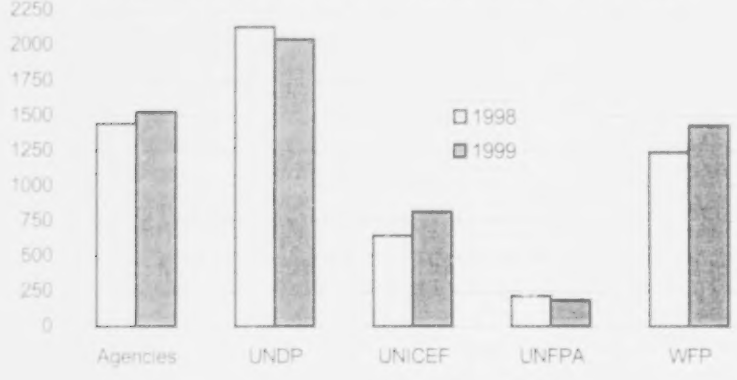
10. In terms of geographic coverage, 16 per cent of the mission-oriented expenditure was used to support activities in Africa in 1999; 15.1 per cent of activities in Asia and the Pacific; 56.8 per cent of activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, 97.2 per cent of which comprised cost-sharing; 3.1 per cent of activities in the Arab States; 4.9 per cent of activities in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; and the rest, about 3.8 per cent for interregional and global activities.

11. The second component, comprising activities supported by funds and trust funds, has been gaining ground, having risen from 14 per cent in 1993 to 20 per cent of total UNDP expenditure in 1999. In terms of amounts, this component supplied $412.3 million as compared to $367.2 million in 1998. This represented an increase of 12.3 per cent. The following countries were the recipients of $50 million or more of total UNDP expenditure (both components) in 1999: Argentina ($197.5 million); Brazil ($150 million); Colombia ($75.8 million); Panama ($124.2 million); Peru ($82.6 million); and Venezuela ($63.6 million). The fact that countries from the Latin America and Caribbean region are the largest recipients is not surprising: these countries have the most cost-sharing.

12. Expenditure by WFP, after contracting from 1993 to 1997, recovered in 1998 and 1999; both years experienced growth of over 15 per cent. In terms of amounts, programme expenditure reached $1,430.5 million in 1999, which was slightly smaller than the amount expended in 1993. By the very nature of its work (primarily to provide assistance to victims of man-made and natural disasters), WFP assistance is, perforce, highly concentrated: 15 per cent of the 1999 expenditure was delivered to a single country, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Other large

recipients included: Sudan — 9.3 per cent of the expenditure in 1999, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia — 7.7 per cent; Angola — 6.6 per cent; Rwanda — 6.3 per cent; and Ethiopia — 6.2 per cent. That is, these six countries absorbed 55 per cent of the value of all assistance supplied by WFP in 1999. Seven other countries each received over $25 million in assistance (Nicaragua, Bangladesh, China, Liberia, Afghanistan, Kenya and India in that order of the level of assistance received).

Chart 3
United Nations system: technical cooperation expenditure by source, 1998-1999 (millions of dollars)



13. Contributions, voluntary and other, to WFP grew strongly in 1999, moving from $1,195.1 million in 1998 to $1,555.4 million, representing an expansion of 30.1 per cent. According to the data, this is the highest level of contributions that WFP has received, at least since 1993. Of the 1999 amount, $1,384.4 million represents voluntary contributions from Member States, up from $1,046.6 million in the previous year. This represents an increase of 32.3 per cent. The United States was the largest contributor in 1999 — it contributed $718.6 million or 52 per cent of all contributions from Member States. Other large contributors (over $40 million) are: Japan — $106.4 million; Canada — $93.4 million; Netherlands — $55.0 million; Germany — $53.1 million; Denmark — $46.9 million; Australia — $45.8 million; and Norway — $41.9 million. In effect, eight countries have provided 74.7 per cent of the 1999 WFP contributions, or 83.9 per cent of contributions from Member States.

14. The executing and specialized agencies, the third largest slice of the technical cooperation pie, have suffered from a diminution of their expenditure after 1995, as can be seen from the table at the end of the report. The following two years, 1996-1997, were lean ones, as the collective expenditure of this group hovered around $1 billion per year. A rapid recovery followed in 1998 and continued into 1999, albeit at a much diminished pace. Consequently, the twentieth century closed with agency expenditure at an all time high, in nominal terms: $1,525.4 million, which was 5.6 per cent more than 1998. With this recovery, came the recovery of lost relative ground: agency share in the pool of technical cooperation expenditure moved back to where it was in the early 1990s — about quarter of total technical cooperation expenditure.

15. Historically, extrabudgetary expenditure has contributed about two thirds of total agency expenditure, with the rest, one third, provided by regular budget. While this historical mean offers a quick insight into overall tendencies, the disaggregated data show that the relative importance of extrabudgetary expenditure has been moving upward. By 1999, it accounted for 70 per cent of total expenditure by the agencies — $1,081.4 million, which is 6.3 per cent more that the previous year. Regular budgetary expenditure amounted to $444 million, posting an increase of 4.1 per cent over 1998.

16. While 23 agencies provided technical cooperation expenditure to developing countries, the flow is rather highly concentrated by both agency and recipient country. In 1999, WHO and FAO were jointly responsible for 30 per cent of the technical cooperation expenditure, about 2 per cent less than the previous year. The dominance of the annual flow of technical cooperation expenditure by these two agencies has given way, however. Thus, their combined share has slipped from 60 per cent in the early 1990s. Four other agencies also provided significant amounts of technical cooperation expenditure: the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with expenditure in 1988 more than twice that of 1997; the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), both of which experienced some contraction in 1998; and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHS), with 1998 expenditure more than double that of 1997. The other agencies, while not of overwhelming significance in terms of actual dollar amount spent, are together important participants in the technical cooperation endeavour through many other ways — for example, their expertise, organizational and logistic abilities.

17. Iraq was the largest recipient of agency assistance in 1999 ($122.8 million as compared to $104.8 million in the previous year), accounting for 8 per cent of the total expenditure incurred by the agencies. Extrabudgetary resources in the form of the oil-for-food programme supplied almost this entire amount ($120.9 million). Other countries that received more than $10 million included: Brazil — $68.9 million; Argentina — $27.7 million; China — $27.5 million; India — $15.4 million; Bangladesh — $12.1 million; and Bolivia — $10.2 million.

18. Total contributions to agencies, after stagnating between 1992 and 1996, spiked in 1997, fell in 1998 and then spiked again in 1999 (see table). The spike in 1999 was the result of contributions reaching $1,577 million, which represented a growth of 21.6 per cent from 1998. The spike derived its push from a very robust growth of bilateral contributions: from $868.6 million in 1998 to $1,261.9 million, an increase of 45.2 per cent, the largest since 1993. On the other hand, total multilateral contributions sank by 26.4 per cent in 1999, moving from $428.1 million in 1998 to $315.1 million. This meant that total multilateral contributions contracted three years in a row.

19. After three years (1996-1998) in which its support to developing countries was valued at less than $700 million per year, UNICEF experienced a resurgence of expenditure in 1999: from $645 million in 1998 to $817.9 million. This represents an increase of 26.8 per cent and is closer to the level of expenditure disbursed during the middle years of the decade. Africa was the largest beneficiary of UNICEF expenditure, accounting, on the average, for 36.8 per cent during 1995-1999 although its share in 1999 was about 1 per cent less than it was in the previous year. The share of Asia, which accounted for another 30 per cent of the expenditure

during the five-year period, grew each year since 1995, rising to 32.3 per cent by 1999. Another 11.1 per cent of the expenditure was invested in Americas and the Caribbean, but this region's share has been contracting since 1996. Next in relative importance was the Middle East and North Africa region, which was responsible for 10.3 per cent of the expenditure, followed by Central and Eastern Europe and Baltic States (7.4 per cent) and interregional and global activities (4.8 per cent). For further details, see table 14 of DP/2000/39/Add.1. Evidently, UNICEF activities are heavily concentrated in the Africa and the Asia regions, which jointly absorbed 70 per cent of the 1999 expenditure. With $69.9 million worth of assistance, India accounted for 8.5 per cent of the total expenditure delivered in 1999. Other large recipients included: Bangladesh — $36.3 million; Ethiopia — $30.5 million; The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia — $26.7 million; Democratic Republic of the Congo — $22.7 million; and Nigeria — $22.6 million. Thus, according to the data, six countries accounted for a quarter of the 1999 expenditure.

20. Total contributions received in 1999, less adjustments, increased significantly — from $999.0 million to $1,635.4 million. Not only is this an increase of 63.7 per cent, but it is significantly above contributions in the past. Of this amount, $687.4 million comprise regular resources while the rest were supplementary funds and other resources. The data indicate that, while regular resources fluctuated considerably between positive and negative values, the positive domain was in ascendancy during the past two years. In fact, the robust performance in 1999 — growth by 16.1 per cent — was last seen only in 1994. The largest contributor in 1999 was the United States as it provided $205.0 million, or 29.8 per cent, of regular resources. Other donors with contributions in excess of $20 million include: Norway — $74.4 million; Sweden — $65.0 million; Denmark — $56.7 million; Netherlands — $51.2 million; Japan — $50.9 million; United Kingdom — $37.7 million; Switzerland — $23.7 million; and Finland — $23.1 million. These together contributed 85 per cent of UNICEF regular resources in 1999.

21. According to the data, UNFPA programme expenditure amounted to $187.1 million in 1999, which is $29.5 million lower that the previous year ($216.6 million). This contraction — 13.6 per cent — continues a trend that began in 1996. The Asia-Pacific region accounted for the largest share of the expenditure in 1999 — 33.7 per cent, up by 1.4 per cent from the previous year; the Africa region accounted for 31.9 per cent, almost 1 per cent less than last year. Together, these two regions were the recipients of 65.6 per cent of the expenditure incurred by UNFPA in 1999. The rest of the expenditure was distributed equally, more or less, among the other three regions: interregional and global activities — 12.6 per cent, slightly up from 1998; Arab States and Europe — 11.7 per cent, about 0.4 per cent more than in 1998; and Latin America and the Caribbean — 10.2 per cent, down from 11.4 per cent in 1998. With $7.0 million, India was the top beneficiary of assistance from UNFPA in 1999. Four other countries received more than $5 million in assistance: Bangladesh ($5.9 million); Pakistan ($5.5 million); China ($5.5 million); Viet Nam ($5.3 million). Together, these five countries accounted for 15.6 per cent of UNFPA total programme expenditure in 1999. The following countries were the recipient of over $3 million of assistance in 1999: Cambodia, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. In effect, then, slightly more than one third (34.8 per cent) of the expenditure by UNFPA in 1999 was channelled to 15 countries.

22. Regular, paid-up contributions by Member States made to UNFPA declined by 9.1 per cent in 1999, having fallen from $268.4 million in 1998 to $244.1 million — a steady erosion of the level of contributions in the last three years of the twentieth century, from their peak of $302.4 million in 1996. The five largest contributions in 1999 were: Japan ($48.3 million); Netherlands ($42.8 million); Denmark ($27.9 million); Norway ($25.2 million); and the United Kingdom ($24.0 million). In effect, these five countries supplied 71 per cent of regular contributions received by UNFPA in 1999. For more detailed data on UNFPA, see tables 8, 11, 13 and 23 of DP/2000/39/Add.1.

23. For the purposes of the present report, the World Bank Group comprises, as shown in the table, the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA) and other sources. The latter are mainly bilateral arrangements whereby bilateral donors establish funding arrangements with the World Bank or IDA for a specific purpose. There are presently two such arrangements: the Development Grant Facility (DGF) and the Institutional Development Funds (IDF). The World Bank Group no longer supports free-standing technical cooperation activities. However, it does use loans and grants to support similar activities that are related to its large-scale programmes and projects, either prior to start-up or concurrently. Total expenditure devoted to these kinds of activities from the Group amounted to $772.2 million, up from $559.1 million in 1998. The robust growth — 38 per cent — derives in full from IDA.

24. Of the three sources that comprise the World Bank Group, the IDA was the biggest in 1999: it provided $345.0 million, or 44.7 per cent of the total expenditure delivered by the Group, which is much beyond its share in 1998 (24.5 per cent). The explanation for this is, of course, the fact that IDA assistance grew 151 per cent in 1999. About a third of the expenditure was delivered in the form of technical assistance loans (TALs); the rest, in the form of learning and innovation loans (LILs). The World Bank, through TALs and LILs, provided $280.5 million, or 36.2 per cent, of the Group's 1999 expenditure. This is much smaller than its 1998 share, when this entity, with expenditure of $282.8 million, accounted for 50.6 per cent of the total assistance provided by the Group. Like IDA, the World Bank made heavy use of TALs, which accounted for almost 80 per cent of its assistance. The third component of the World Bank Group, other sources, provided slightly under a fifth (19 per cent) of the expenditure in 1999 compared to a quarter in the previous year. The bulk of the assistance, 85.4 per cent, was channelled through the Development Grant Facility.

25. It is thus clear that TALs are the principal means used by the World Bank and IDA to provide institutional support to their large-scale programmes and projects. In consequence, this instrument accounted for 57.8 per cent of the Group's expenditure in 1999 and 71.4 per cent of the combined expenditure by the World Bank and IDA. LILs, used exclusively by the World Bank and IDA, supplied 23.2 per cent of the Group's expenditure; DGF 16.2 per cent; and IDF 2.8 per cent (see tables 8 and 16 of DP/2000/39/Add.1 for more data on the World Bank Group).

III. Executive board action

26. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report.

United Nations system: summary statistics on technical cooperation expenditure and contributions, 1995-1999

	1995		1996		1997		1998		1999	
	$M	%[a]	$M	%[a]	$M	%[a]	$M	%[a]	$M	%[a]
A. Expenditure										
Executing and specialized agencies	1 270.1	2.3	965.7	(23.9)	1 006.5	4.2	1 444.0	43.5	1 523.4	5.6
Regular budgetary expenditures	430.8	(1.8)	389.7	(12.1)	402.6	4.9	426.4	5.9	444.0	4.1
Extrabudgetary expenditures	839.8	2.7	582.9	(30.2)	603.8	3.7	1 017.6	68.5	1 081.4	6.3
UNDP	1 297.4	(0.3)	1 494.1	15.1	1 809.6	20.5	2 190.9	18.7	2 044.1	(4.1)
Regular and associated cost-sharing expenditure	1 014.2	(22.2)	1 251.0	23.4	1 528.7	24.2	1 763.6	15.4	1 631.8	(7.5)
Funds and trust funds administered	283.2	13.9	243.1	(14.2)	281.0	15.6	427.3	52.0	412.3	(3.5)
UNFPA	231.0	14.7	209.8	(9.2)	224.4	(1.0)	219.6	1.0	187.1	(15.6)
UNDCP	803.4	0.1	681.7	(14.9)	672.7	(1.6)	645.0	(4.1)	817.9	(26.8)
UNICEF	1 057.8	(21.0)	1 384.9	(1.2)	1 373.6	(1.0)	1 237.9	15.3	1 430.5	15.6
World Bank (IDA)[b]	1 742.0	137.9	1 851.0	6.3	2 187.2	19.5	559.6		772.2	38.0
Asian Bank	1 004.9	119.8	1 160.1	6.1	1 401.0	20.8	282.8		280.5	(0.8)
IDA	548.0	115.2	670.7	3.5	785.6	17.1	337.5		345.0	5.3
Others (sources)							139.3		146.7	150.9
Total, excluding the World Bank Group	4 659.9	(4.6)	4 445.1	(4.6)	4 767.7	7.3	5 673.9	19.0	6 005.0	5.8
B. Contributions										
Agencies: Extrabudgetary	1 101.9	4.7	1 107.1	1.2	1 349.8	21.9	1 296.9	(3.9)	1 577.0	21.6
Total bilateral	562.3	2.1	750.6	10.0	746.7	(0.5)	868.2	16.4	1 261.9	45.2
Countries/territories	540.0	(2.8)	508.8	(5.8)	569.2	11.9	567.5	(0.3)	875.3	54.2
NGOs	63.4	50.9	79.1	24.8	86.1	8.8	124.5	44.6	168.1	35.0
Unilateral self-supporting	80.9	31.9	162.7	101.1	91.4	(43.8)	176.8	93.2	218.5	23.6
Total multilateral	319.2	11.6	356.5	(15.0)	603.1	69.2	428.1	(29.0)	315.1	(26.4)
United Nations system	387.9	23.1	319.3	(17.7)	570.2	78.6	369.1	(35.3)	216.2	(41.4)
Non-United Nations system	31.5	(48.5)	37.2	18.1	33.0	(11.3)	59.0	78.8	98.9	67.6
UNDP (Voluntary)	899.8	(3.1)	847.9	(5.8)	760.9	(10.3)	745.8	(2.0)	681.4	(8.6)
UNFPA (Voluntary)	293.4	15.0	302.4	3.1	285.4	(5.6)	268.4	(6.0)	244.1	(9.1)
UNICEF (Voluntary)	655.3	(0.6)	722.2	10.2	569.2	(21.2)	592.2	4.0	687.4	16.1
WFP (Voluntary)	1 151.2	(10.3)	1 122.3	(2.5)	1 022.1	(8.9)	1 046.6	2.4	1 384.4	32.3

Note: Contribution data refer to voluntary contributions from Member States, which, therefore, present only a partial, albeit important, picture of total contributions. In the case of UNDP, the data in the table exclude cost-sharing, funds and trust funds, government cash counterpart contributions, contributions to local office costs, extrabudgetary activities and management services agreements; for UNICEF, data exclude various private sources, interorganizational arrangements and miscellaneous; and for WFP, the data exclude contributions from NGOs, the United Nations system and other multilateral donors.

[a] Represents percentage increase over figures for previous year.

[b] Beginning in 1998, the World Bank/IDA no longer specifically report data on technical cooperation expenditure, as noted in the test.